

A Study of Student Adoption of Course Management Systems on Mobile Devices

Shilpa Balan

California State University-Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA, USA

College of Business & Economics
Department of Information Systems
sbalan@calstatela.edu

Nandakumar Ganesan

California State University-Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA, USA

College of Business & Economics
Department of Information Systems
nganesa@calstatela.edu

Abstract

This research examines students' readiness and willingness to use mobile devices for accessing course management systems. The focus is to conduct a study based on a survey of students' attitude and comfort levels towards mobile learning. The study analyzes the survey results to identify factors that motivate students to access learning management systems on mobile devices. Mobile devices include personal digital assistants (PDAs), mobile phones, and Tablet PCs.

A total of fifty-seven students from a public university participated in the survey. At a later stage, students from a private university will be included in the study. Students participating in the study used a course management system such as Moodle or a standalone course website developed and hosted on Google Sites. The site contained all the course related material.

The responses from the survey were measured based on the Likert scale. An analysis of the preliminary survey results indicates that convenience, prior mobile-learning experience, familiarity with course management systems and perceived ease of use of the systems are some factors that most likely encourage students to access course management systems on mobile devices. The early results also show that students are more inclined to use mobile devices for learning as they gather more experience using the devices and the course management systems.

The initial results also indicate that spatial and temporal flexibility offered by the online websites and mobile devices was an important factor contributing to the use of mobile devices to access course management systems. Yet another factor observed was that the users who perceived that it was easy to use course management systems were more likely to engage in m-learning.

The study is thus intended to help identify factors that would facilitate and encourage students to use mobile devices in their learning process. In particular, it is aimed at exploring the use of mobile devices to access course websites. The next stage of the research would compare the usage of mobile devices in m-learning between students enrolled in a private and a public university. The purpose is to identify the differences, if any, in the use of mobile devices between students from different socio-economic backgrounds. An extension of this research would focus on investigating whether a particular design of a course website encourages the students to use mobile devices more frequently to access a course website.

The findings from these studies are expected to contribute in two ways. First, they would help identify the factors that, in general, influence the use of mobile devices in learning. Second, they would shed light on the important design considerations that should be taken into account when designing a course website for m-learning.